

# SOUTHWEST IPAC HUB NEWSLETTER

## What is the IPAC Hub?

The Southwest IPAC Hub is a collaboration between Middlesex-London Health Unit, the Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team and Southwestern Public Health. We provide advice, guidance and direct supports to IPAC leads and those responsible for IPAC in congregate living settings including Long-term care homes, Retirement homes, Group homes, Shelters, Supportive Housing, Residential Treatment Centres and Hospices.

## What Services Do We Provide?

- Our team works collaboratively with partners to provide the following IPAC services and supports:
- Development of education and training programs and materials
- Supportive visits and consultations,
- Assistance with IPAC self-assessments,
- Best practice recommendations and implementation support,
- Coaching/mentoring on IPAC practices,
- Outbreak Management planning,
- Communities of practice

## New/Important Updates

Has Covid-19 guidance changed recently for your sector?

The [Public Health Guidance for Covid-19](#) has changed (COVID-19 Guidance for Public Health Units: Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Other Congregate Living Settings Version 11 – June 26, 2023)

Watch for updates from your sector leadership about specific changes applicable to your congregate setting.

## Some Highlights of Changes:

- Addition of the concept of non-high risk COVID-19 transmission vs higher risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Changes in mask requirements.
- Added clarity on visitor restrictions after a visitor tests positive or is symptomatic.
- Added information on staff return-to-work when staff test positive or are symptomatic.
- Additional recommendations for proactively assessing residents for COVID-19 therapeutics prior to potential infection.
- Other changes as outlined in the guidance document.

## Upcoming CoPs/Practice Meeting

## Upcoming Educational Opportunities

## Article of Interest

Summer BBQ Safety  
Lyme Disease

## IPAC Canada Corner – local Chapter news (IPAC SWO)

## New/Important Updates

Covid-19 Guidance changes

The E-newsletter is distributed electronically to long-term care homes, retirement homes and congregate living settings in Southwest IPAC Hub region.

Contact your IPAC Hub: [ipachub@swpublichealth.ca](mailto:ipachub@swpublichealth.ca)



Middlesex London  
Health Unit:  
[IDC@mlhu.on.ca](mailto:IDC@mlhu.on.ca)



Southwestern Public Health:  
[ipachub@swpublichealth.ca](mailto:ipachub@swpublichealth.ca)



Huron Perth and Area  
Ontario Health Team  
[ipachub@hpaoh.t.ca](mailto:ipachub@hpaoh.t.ca)

## Upcoming Educational Opportunities

### Special Surveillance Series: IPAC Central West and West Novice Infection Prevention and Control Professionals (ICP) Community of Practice (CoP)

IPAC Central West and West: Novice ICP CoP

Details: Target Audience:

These two sessions are focused on Surveillance and are targeted to Novice Infection Prevention and Control Professionals (ICPs) with 5 years or less experience in all sectors or those ICPs that would like more foundational knowledge in Surveillance.

This is a great opportunity for those who would like to network with other ICPs in these settings.

Session Dates and Times

These sessions will focus on Surveillance and will be held:

**Session 1:** Wednesday, September 13, 2023 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 pm. EST (12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. CST)

This session will focus on Surveillance planning, data collection and data analysis

**Session 2:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 pm. EST (12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. CST)

This session will focus on interpretation of data, communication of results and evaluation

Register in advance for this session:

Please include any IPAC topics/issues you would like to discuss at the cop in your registration.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZYrceCoqDwoEtJiAFtDNMWDIWHODJ9ARZYJ>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining this session.

Please send any questions related to this series by emailing [ipacimplementation@oahpp.ca](mailto:ipacimplementation@oahpp.ca).



IPAC-SWO, the Southwestern Ontario chapter of IPAC Canada, is excited to host a **full day, in-person** Infection Prevention and Control Educational Workshop

"**IPAC FUN-damentals**" on **Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at the Hellenic Centre** (133 Southdale Road W., London).

**IPAC FUN-damentals** will be a full day of interactive sessions to highlight key infection prevention and control (IPAC) principles to improve patient safety and to strengthen infection control programs.

Workshop components/modules will include basic principles of IPAC:

- **Chain of transmission**
- **Routine practices and additional precautions**
- **Surveillance**
- **Microbiology**
- **Outbreak management** - to name a few!

The purpose of the workshop is to introduce participants to the practice of IPAC and to increase participants' knowledge and establish practical skills for managing the prevention and control of infections and diseases.

If you are new to Infection Control or would like a post-pandemic refresher, this event is for you!

**Registration is now OPEN!**

Click here: [www.eventbrite.ca/e/ipac-swo-education-day-fundamentals-of-infection-prevention-and-control-tickets-621043506847](http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/ipac-swo-education-day-fundamentals-of-infection-prevention-and-control-tickets-621043506847)

Early Bird Registration Closes October 4, 2023 @ 11:59 p.m.  
Registration Closes October 18, 2023.



## IPAC SWO (your local Chapter of IPAC Canada) offers

Face-to face meetings, [webinars](#) and [educational workshops](#) to meet the educational needs of its members. In 2023, IPAC SWO is pleased to announce that a return to in-person chapter meetings for the June and September meetings. Please continue to visit their website for chapter meeting details! <https://swo.ipac-canada.org/>

In addition to chapter meetings and educational sessions, IPAC SWO is proud to offer:

- Scholarship funding for members to attend the Annual IPAC Canada National Conference
- Support in preparing for Certification in Infection Prevention and Control (CIC)
- Funding opportunities for IPAC Education, CIC certification and renewal
- Opportunities to connect and IPAC professionals regionally and across Canada

To join IPAC-Canada and IPAC-SWO, visit [IPAC-Canada](#) and view this [welcome brochure](#).



## Upcoming CoPs/Practice Meetings for July & August

### Middlesex London/Southwestern Public Health

July 20<sup>th</sup>, Congregate Living  
July 25<sup>th</sup>, Long Term Care  
July 26<sup>th</sup>, Retirement Home  
August 17<sup>th</sup>, Congregate Living

### Huron Perth

July 12<sup>th</sup> August 9<sup>th</sup>, Long Term Care  
July 19<sup>th</sup>, August 16<sup>th</sup>, Retirement Home  
July 14<sup>th</sup> , August 11<sup>th</sup> Congregate Living  
July 28<sup>th</sup> , August 25<sup>th</sup> “open mike” session

Did you know that an ICP must maintain awareness of more unusual causes of infection such as food poisoning and illnesses caused by ticks and mosquitoes? Not only can these topics be found occasionally as questions on the CIC exam, they are also potential threats to the well-being of your residents and patients. Learn the very basics and then most importantly, know how to access the latest information on these subjects. Risks for both these types of infections can increase over the summer.

## Who doesn't love those summer picnics and barbecues?

Summer picnics and barbecues are a fantastic way to enjoy the warm weather and spend time with friends and family both for the staff and the residents of congregate living settings. It is also a time that an increase in foodborne illnesses occur due to factors such as warmer temperatures and improper food safety controls while being outdoors.



Foodborne illnesses may make people sick for a few days and most will recover without treatment, however vulnerable population such as children, elderly and people with weakened immune system may get extremely ill and require medical treatment.

Before you start your barbecues or serving food in hot summer weather, it is important to follow these food safety tips. While long-term care homes and larger homes will have staff with specialized training in food safety practices, these tips should be learned and followed by smaller facilities and at home.

The four core practices to safe food preparation include:

1. Clean by washing your hand and surfaces often.
2. Don't cross contaminate by separating raw foods and ready-to-eat foods.
3. Cook to safe internal temperature and verify using a probe thermometer.
4. Chill and refrigerate food promptly.

Public Health Units offer food safety and disease prevention information to all members of the community. Please refer to your local health unit for more summer food safety tips. [Southwestern Public Health Unit](#), [Middlesex-London Health Unit](#), [Huron Perth Public Health](#)



## The most unwelcome bites

As warm weather sends people outdoors, it is also a time when the risk of tick exposure is at its highest. Although tick exposures can occur year-round, they are most active in spring and summer. Ticks are usually found in forested areas or areas with long grass, where they attach themselves to humans and animals passing by. They cannot fly or jump.

There are different tick species in Ontario, but the blacklegged tick is one that can carry and transmit Lyme disease to humans via a tick bite. However, not all blacklegged ticks carry the bacteria that causes Lyme disease.

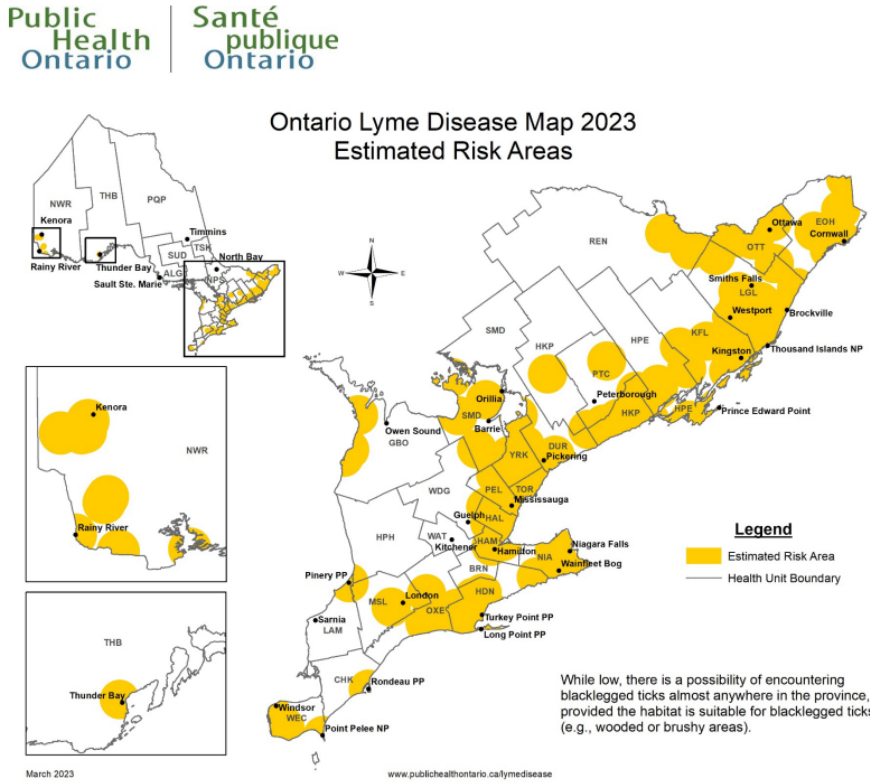
Although the symptoms of Lyme disease vary with each person, not everyone who is bitten by an infected tick will develop signs and symptoms of Lyme disease.

If you or a resident have been bitten by a blacklegged tick or have concerns about potentially related symptoms, please seek advice from your healthcare provider or your local public health unit.

Your local public health unit's website is a valuable resource for up-to-date information about Lyme Disease. Public Health Ontario publishes The Ontario Lyme Disease Map: Estimated Risk Areas and updates it annually. It provides useful information to support public health professionals and clinicians in their management of Lyme disease. [Southwestern Public Health](#), [Middlesex-London Health Unit](#), [Huron Perth Public Health](#)

The Ontario Lyme Disease Map: Estimated Risk Areas is updated annually by [Public Health Ontario](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/). It provides useful information to support public health professionals and clinicians in their management of Lyme disease.

## Ontario Lyme Disease Map - Estimated Risk Areas



## Reference

Public Health Ontario: Let's Talk About Ticks <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/About/News/2022/Tick-Season#:~:text=Ticks%20in%20Ontario&text=Although%20they%20are%20primarily%20active,the%20temperature%20is%20above%20freezing>. Government of Ontario: Lyme Disease <https://www.ontario.ca/page/lyme-disease#section-3>

Public Health Ontario: Surveillance Report-Ontario Lyme Disease Map 2023: Estimated Risk Areas [https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/L/2023/ontario-lyme-disease-risk-area-map-2023.pdf?rev=be0fe7cf7bdf48cb9ccbb1503e58a27c&sc\\_lang=en](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/L/2023/ontario-lyme-disease-risk-area-map-2023.pdf?rev=be0fe7cf7bdf48cb9ccbb1503e58a27c&sc_lang=en)